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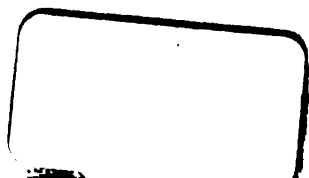
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BOOK OF VERSES

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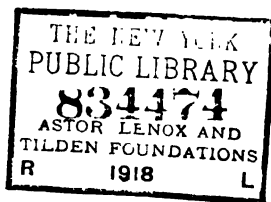
W. B. GORDON

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1887



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PREFACE.

YE rhymester thought to mayke a booke,
And searched hys crop of verse to fynde
Yf hee, by any hooke or crooke,
Coulede mayke y^t thicke enough to bynde.

Of modest mien and little pelfe,
Hee feared to seeke y^e prynter's aide,
And so hee sett y^e type hymselfe,
And here's y^e booke y^e rhymester mayde.

Some rhymes are gay and some are grave,
And some but little to hys mynde;
But these y^e rhymester had to save
To mayke y^t thicke enough to bynde.

Ye rhymester hopes y^e readers' heads

Wyll not be in an awful rage

Wyth heavy paper, triple leads,

And very little on a page.

Perhaps they'll thynke y^t quyte enough,—

A great abundance of y^e kynde..

Att least, by using all hys stuffe,

Hee mayde y^t thicke enough to bynde.

W. B. G.

WEST POINT, N. Y.,

YE 11th MON., 20th DAY, 1887.

L'ENVOI.

GO forth, and hope thou not
Fond hearts to sway,
But may it be thy lot
A humbler part to play.
If, in some dreary hour,
But one dear heart
Be lightened by thy power,—
Then thou hast played thy part.

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SONNET.

(TRAILING ARBUTUS.)

WHEN hearts by love are willing captives led,
Unhappy they while love is unconfessed.

While thou unto my trembling lips art pressed
I whisper words to mortals yet unsaid.

Sweet flower, I pluck thee from thy mossy bed,

And bid thee change thy home, to rest —

Where bliss awaits thee—on her pearly breast.

How sweet the hours in such a garden sped.

This be my olive-branch, and thou my dove ;

And when in that fair garden thou shalt bloom,

Then softly whisper my undying love,

And breathe away thy life in sweet perfume.

But leave thy fragrance in her heart of gold,

That thus my love forever may be told.

AT THE BALL.

BACK again
To the world !

And the pain

That once hurled

My heart's love

From its throne

Makes me shudder and moan

That it still has such power to move.

Friends of old

With me here—

That I hold

Still so dear—

I would spurn

After all,

Could I only recall

The promise that made me return.

And the smile
I must wear
All the while,
When I bear
Such a weight
At my heart !
Must I finish the part
That I play by the fiat of Fate?

Thus at strife
With my heart
Till my life
And my part
Are played out,—
Must I be ?
No ! I'll fight till I see
All the foes of my life put to rout.

A FRAGMENT.

FADE, fade, sweet flower, fade fast away ;
And fade, my memory of the day
That gave thee to my sight.
Dead is the hope that came with thee ;
So may thy cruel fragrance flee
And leave me to my night.

A DREAM.

I DREAMT that in some fairy-land
Where Cupid tends the bowers,
Where all for perfect love is planned
And souls live in the flowers,—

We dwelt together 'neath a sky
That ne'er was dim or hazy.
Thou wert a violet, and I
A happy, happy daisy.

HORACE, BOOK III. ODE IX.

Horace.

TILL thy fair bosom's snowy charms
Could lie content in other arms,
Sure of thy love, naught else I sought,
And Persia's monarch envied not.

Lydia.

Till thou couldst from thy Lydia part,—
Ere hated Chloe touched thy heart,—
How blest was I, so loved by thee
That Ilia's fame was naught to me.

Horace.

Fair Chloe now my bosom sways
With touch of lyre and sweetest lays.
For her my life I'd freely give,
Content to die that she might live.

Lydia.

Now youthful Calais loves me well.
With mutual fire our bosoms swell.
Twice would I gladly die to save
My Thurian lover from the grave.

Horace.

What if the love that chained us then
Should bind our willing hearts again?
If fair-haired Chloe now I spurn
And ask my Lydia to return?

Lydia.

Though Calais' brow be fairer far
Than is the brightest morning star,—
Thou rough and fickle as the sea,—
Yet would I live — and die — with thee.

FOR AN ALBUM.

I WISH not all thy life may be
A never-failing pure delight,
But that each joy that comes to thee
By trial may be made more bright.
For ours would be a dreary lot
If no tear e'er the cheek shone on ;
Our liveliest joys would be forgot,
And love would die if hate were gone.
All joy that life can claim
Be unto thee whose name
Now hidden lies this page upon.

THEN AND NOW.

THEN.

ON this sweet spot two lovers sigh,
And vow their love will never die.
(If man had never loved on earth,
I'd wager this were Cupid's birth.)

NOW.

On this sweet spot two lovers sighed.
I wonder if their love has died !
(Each wedded another ere long. Ah, well!
You can't most always sometimes tell.)

TWO RONDEAUX.

I.

MY VASSAR GIRL.

BLOW, Summer breezes, gently blow
The spirit of my heart's rondeau
From Highland hills my love to greet,—
The bloom upon her cheek to meet
And kindle there an answering glow.

Would I could on your fleet wings go,
And with you flutter to and fro
To see the blushes of my sweet,—
My Vassar girl.

Long as the Hudson's waves shall flow,
The spirit of my love shall grow
And follow her with flying feet.
Comme elle est belle, ma chère petite.
You too will think so when you know
My Vassar girl.

II.

MY OWN CADET.

O dear! we girls are all to go
To West Point on the boat, you know.

They told me so just down the street.
And wont we have a jolly treat!
I know my face is all aglow.

And now my heart is beating so
I don't know what to do; for Oh,
What do you think? I am to meet
My own Cadet.

You know he sent that sweet rondeau
That rhymes with blow, and grow, and flow.
The old boat cannot go *trop vite*.
(If he's sufficiently discreet
Then I will pay him all I owe,—)
My own Cadet!

A SERENADE.

SLEEP, my darling, slumber bring thee
To the realms of Dream-land near ;
But the song that now I sing thee
 May thy waking spirit hear,
So that thou shalt dream I'm near thee,—
 That I guard thee in thy sleep.
O may thy sweet spirit hear me
 While my watch of love I keep.

Sleep, my darling, while around thee
 Soft and pale the moonbeams fall.
Here the chain of love has bound me,
 And my soul to thine doth call.
Dream, my love, that I am near thee,—
 That I kiss thee in thy sleep.
O may thy sweet spirit hear me
 While my watch of love I keep.

A VALENTINE.

DEAR lady, let me lift my eyes
In deep humility to thine.
As mortals hope to reach the skies,
So let me hope to call thee mine.
Thou art the perfect dream of love
That lifts my soul from baser earth
To rest on purer thoughts above
And know thee at thy priceless worth.

Fair as the dawn of summer morn
And sweet as dying eve in May,
And pure as breath of virgin borne
To heaven while she kneels to pray;
O matchless being ! from afar
I worship at thy holy shrine.
Sweet love shall be my guiding star
If thou wilt be my Valentine.

A ROMANCE OF THE SLIDE.

TOGETHER they hied
To the top of the slide,
To mount the wild toboggan ;
For they had agreed,
Whatever the steed,
Together through life to jog on.

Her blanket suit
Went down the chute
Like a streak of greaséd lightning,
The while she felt
Around her belt
His arm securely tightening.

Says she "What bliss
To shoot like this
Through life's steep chute together.
So shoot the bumper
Who sighs for Summer,
But give us Wintry weather."

Then they suddenly stop
And spin like a top,
Till you can't tell which from whether;
And then they fall,
Toboggan and all,
In a helpless heap together.

She crawls from the drift

Without deigning to lift

Her eyes to his crest-fallen features ;

And he hears her say

As she limps away,

“ I hate such careless creatures.”

And since their slide

They have not been tied,

And together they never will jog on ;

And their “ —— it ” suits

All treacherous chutes

Where sails the wild toboggan.

AT THE HOP.

I MET her at the hop;
And I felt a sudden stop
In the calm and placid beating of my heart,
For her face was so divine
As she raised her eyes to mine
That I straightway felt a thrust from Cupid's dart.

I begged her for a dance,
And I felt the little lance
Sinking deep into my organ of affection,
Which was beating very hard
As I took the little card
She so gracefully produced for my inspection.

And when my arm was placed
Around her dainty waist,
Then I felt that Cupid's dart was in to stay;
And the agitation felt
Near the region of my belt
Was intenser when the music ceased to play.

Then I offered her my arm,
And a nameless vivid charm
Seemed to claim me as we sauntered thro' the hall.
But the pretty things I said
Did not seem to turn her head,
And she looked as if she heard them not at all.

Then I led her to the tank,
And a cooling draught she drank;
And a "Cit" stood by and smiled at her so sweetly
That I longed to punch his head,
When she turned to me and said,
"My husband." And I wilted then completely.

And I wiped my crimson face
With her fan of dainty lace,
A circumstance that's quite beyond belief.
But if you can believe,
I poked it up my sleeve
And fanned her with my pocket-handkerchief.

SONNET.

THE STATUE OF LIBERTY.

O THOU great Goddess at the nation's gate!
May thy strong arm, uplifted for the right,
Pierce Earth's deep darkness with refulgent light,
The only weapon that all tyrants hate.
Guide safe to port old Ocean's precious freight.
And as thy beams shall pierce the angry night,
A welcome beacon to the sailor's sight,
So may thy spirit guide our Ship of State.

When waves of discord beat against her side,
When stormy winds would drive her on the shore,
And sunken rocks shall lie before her prow,
Thy spirit teach her then the waves to ride
And float in peace till stormy winds are o'er;
And may her latest day be bright as now.

SONNET.

A PORTRAIT.

THERE hangs a picture on the darkened wall;
Uplifted eyes and trembling lips. A place
For smiles and tears and kisses. I can trace
Upon her lovely features signs of all.
To the dim past it never fails to call
My soul. In sunshine all the lines efface.
In shadows how distinct they lie ! The face
Grows bright when dim lights on the canvas fall.

The artist is a sturdy youth,— with wings.
The canvas broke,— it was so tightly stretched.
'Tis more a work of nature than of art,
And of the brush I still can feel the stings,
Though ten long years ago 'twas sketched
From life upon the canvas of my heart.

THE PROPOSAL.

I ASKED her. And what did she say?
Why, Kate, don't you think you could guess?
I have known for many a day
That the answer would surely be yes.

'Twas jolly! And what did I do?
Well, that's a bold question, *ma belle*,
But still I don't mind telling you,
For we know one another so well.

You see we had wandered away
To this sweet little spot that I love;
But were we on earth? I can't say,
For I surely felt lifted above.

When she lifted her sweet eyes to mine,
And murmured that dear little word
In accents so sweet, so divine,
Ah, was it a mortal I heard?

And then our loving lips met
In one long, sweet, lingering kiss.
Ye gods! I can taste the sweets yet
Of that double concentrated bliss.

Why, your eyes are beginning to fill!
Forgive me, dear Kate, I confess;
I have not asked yet, but I will.
Speak, darling, and answer me yes.

STANZAS.

TELL me, gentle breeze,
Whispering thro' the trees,
If in some wild gladsome freak
You have kissed my fair one's cheek.
Never will you meet
Other face so sweet.

Have you ever heard
Sweetest note of bird
Half so sweet as that she sings
When her dreamy carolings
Murmur soft and low
Like a brooklet's flow?

Watching her the while
Have you seen her smile?
All her soul is in her eyes
As her long dark lashes rise
When she smiles on me,—
Smiles on happy me.

Waft, then, gentle breeze,
Whispering thro' the trees,
One sweet kiss to her I love,—
One sweet kiss that well may prove
All my love for her,—
Me her worshiper.

SONNET.

HARK! hear the bugle echo o'er the plain,
To call us back within the old gray walls
Where oft we tread the maze of Learning's halls.
How sweetly sounds the old familiar strain.
Minerva woos us now to thoughts of war;
But one fair goddess do I hold above
The patron of the arts and war. I love
Minerva not the less, but you the more.

The siege I laid to win your heart began
With naught of strategy, or grand display,
Or forces in reserve content to wait.
Ah, no! the only *parallels* I ran
Were outstretched arms; and then, behold, straightway
We both surrendered. Quick, good night! * * I'm late.

SONNET.

AS when the humming-bird flits near a flower
And flutters for an instant in the air,
Thrilled with delight at all the sweetness there,
And feels that sweetness all within its power,—
Sips in anticipation o'er and o'er
The honeyed depths of nature's lovely cells,
Ere drawing from those golden nectar-wells
Of delectation their abundant store,—

So I, when hov'ring o'er a fairer flower
Than ever bloomed in fairest earthly bower,
Drink long, deep draughts of pure ethereal bliss,
And then, entranced with one ecstatic kiss,
I sip the nectar from her angel lips,
And feel the sweetness to my finger tips.

THREE PICTURES.

I.

ONLY a bonny lad
Clad in his coat of gray;
Only a sweet young maid,—
Both at the same old play.
Ah, the sweet things they said,
And the hope that was born that day!

II.

Only a battle fought
Where the western sun glows red;
Only a soldier brave
Lying among the dead;
And the portrait at his heart
Is dyed in the blood that he shed.

III.

Only a broken heart

That vainly sighs for rest.

Only a smothered sob

That will not be repress.

Alas for the sweet young maid

And the hope that was born in her breast !

A FANCY.

ONCE on a time, in Fancy's fields,
I wandered till my weary feet
Found rest where fickle Fancy yields
To man what makes his life most sweet.

While on the flow'ry bank I slept
And dreams of love my being thrilled,
Fair Fancy there her vigil kept
And all my sweetest dreams fulfilled.

"Wouldst thou," she said, "in Fancy's fields
The fairest of our race behold?
She reigns the Queen of Love, and wields
O'er all our hearts her wand of gold."

And then, mid scenes of beauty rare,
I saw thy radiant face, that yields —
In all that makes love's dream most fair —
To naught in Fancy's fairest fields.

SONNET.

A DEDICATION.

GREAT names there are whose praise is sung by all.

Let mine be not unsung by thee, whose name

So often fills my thoughts, and then the fame

So great that on more favored ones may fall —

That grows with every hour — I envy not.

And fairest reader mine, if thou canst see

Thy name upon this page, — if here it be, —

Canst thou then with that knowledge read my thought.

For nestling here, as in my thoughts, there lies —

From other eyes obscured — a name. If thine,

It is to thee these idle thoughts of mine

I freely dedicate. And may the ties

That now unite us, friends as true as dear,

Prove dearer with the flight of every year.

TO B. M. B.

RONDEL.

I FILL this cup to B. M. B.
And drink her health in Extra Dry,
Though she is extra dry to me
Whene'er to win her heart I try.

Though she has caused me many a sigh
And will not be my own Marie,
I fill this cup to B. M. B.
And drink her health in Extra Dry.

Perhaps she thinks I am too shy,
And would consent if I should be
A trifle bolder and more "fly."
I'll take my hat and go to see.
(I fill this cup to B. M. B.
And drink her health in Extra Dry.)

FOR ———.

MY heart and I have strolled away,
And I have found the place
To lay my head
Among the dead
When I have run my race;
And Oh that I could go to-day!

The very earth seems so divine,
'Tis such a lovely spot;
E'en tho' no tear
Should reach me here,
I could not be forgot
If such a resting place were mine.

Though but a name were graven there
Above my weary head,
Some kindred heart
From which I part
Might come with silent tread,
And read a tale from the marble fair.

And if my own true love will go
My resting place to see,
And linger near
To shed a tear,
How happy I shall be
When the angels come to tell me so.

UNDER A CLOUD.

O RESTLESS sea!
Thy waves, though free,
Seem chafing 'neath the lowering mist;
But when God's eye
Shines from the sky,
They laugh and play, by sunlight kissed.

O restless heart!
Would I could part
The cloud that dims thy lover sky,
And, like the sea,
Grow wild with glee
Beneath the smile of one bright eye.

HYMN.

(AIR, SILENT NIGHT.)

GOD of light,
In Thy might,
Guide our feeble steps aright.
While we lift our eyes to Thee,
Grant that we Thy light may see,—
See Thy glorious light.

Lord, to-day,
While we pray,
Help us cast the world away;
Help us lift our thoughts above,
Fill our souls with peace and love,
Teach us how to pray.

MIDNIGHT, DEC. 31, 1875.

THE dear Old Year is dying,
The Winter wind is sighing,
A pure snow sheet is lying
Upon the cold, cold ground;
I watch the dead leaves quiver,
The ghostly old trees shiver,
The moonbeams on the river,
The mountains all snow-bound.

The winds are sighing for thee,
The trees are weeping o'er thee,
The grand old hills adore thee,
All love thee, dear Old Year.
Time, like a mighty river,
Flows on and ceases never,
But thou art gone forever,
And Nature drops a tear.

SONG.

WHISPER once again, my darling,
That such happiness is mine,—
That I'm loved (though all unworthy)
By a creature so divine;
No, let the silence be unbroken,
Lest a whisper break the spell
That holds us in this sweet Elysium,
Where e'en the angels cannot dwell.

Speak to me in love's sweet language,—
By thy smiles and happy tears;
And I'll answer thee with kisses,—
Pledge of faith through coming years.
But let the silence be unbroken,
Lest a whisper break the spell
That holds us in this sweet Elysium,
Where e'en the angels cannot dwell.

THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

I FIRED an arrow into the air.
It fell to earth, and I know where.
A policeman found its pointed end
Sticking fast in the heart of a friend.

I fired a song at an editaire.
It fell in the basket beside his chair.
It is easy to follow the flight of a song
When you know the fellow who sent it along.

Because of the arrow this son of Mars
Was fired behind the prison bars;
And the world has lost a poet rare
Because of the basket beside the chair.

AFTERMATH.

(SECOND MARRIAGES.)

WHEN love's Summer fields are mown,
When death's shade has softer grown,
And they tread life's shortened path;
Though the hair be tinged with snow,
Or perhaps has ceased to grow,
Again the fields of love they mow
And gather in the aftermath.

Not the flowers that first love bears
Is this harvesting of their's;
Not the perfect Summer bloom
Of the grass in pleasant meads;
But a gathering of *weeds*
That have died and dropped their seeds
In the shadow of the tomb.

TO ———.

THE golden cord of friendship
Has bound us heart to heart,
And we have learned the lesson
That friends too soon must part;
And as our pathways differ,
One boon I ask of thee:—
That sometimes you'll remember
The friend you have in me.

The time we've spent together
Seems like a Summer day,
That sweetly dawns upon us
But swiftly glides away;
And when you spoke of parting,
In accents soft and low,
You seemed so like a sister
I scarce could let you go.

But cruel Time will sever
The strongest earthly ties,
And life itself too often
Seems but a "bridge of sighs."
But one who loves the Summer
Must bear with Winter snows;
And though the thorns may pierce us,
We'll give thanks for the rose.

A COUSIN.

OF all the jolly things in life,
Unless you chance to have a wife
Your every grief and joy to share,—
To scratch your eyes and pull your hair,—
How nice to have a cousin!

A sister's fondness, brothers tell,
For home consumption answers well.
Of strangers you had best beware;
But then, 'tis quite *une autre affaire*
If she is only cousin.

How oft a tender, loving word
Is softly breathed and gladly heard,
And conscience quieted with this:—
“What harm to steal one little kiss
When she is only cousin?”

If with a stranger you but walk,
The gossips never cease to talk;
But one may boldly stroll away,
And "spooney" all the livelong day
 If she is only cousin.

And if you sometimes wish to meet
A girl that you would like to greet
As friend, and keep the gossips still,
(I wish you'd answer if you will,)
 What harm to call her cousin?

100 DAYS TO JUNE.

A DAY is coming, sweetheart mine,
Preceded by but ninety-nine,
When sweet perfume
Will meet us on the balmy air,
And we will bid good-by to care
When roses bloom.

How long the days, O sweetheart mine,
(Preceded by but ninety-nine)
Till we resume
The sweet communion that we knew.
I wonder if you'll still be true
When roses bloom.

Then will I don the Army Blue
And hasten, love, to be with you,
 Unless my doom
The Academic Board pronounce
And give "yours truly" the "grand bounce"
 When roses bloom.

And if I fail to graduate
Some other "file" you'll captivate,
 And I'll make room
For one who'll suit as well as I,
And you'll forget me by and by
 When roses bloom.

Well, love is but a fitful flame,
And two can play at that old game;
 And I presume
It's very well that one can flirt
And change a lover like a shirt,
 So let them bloom.

OSCULATION.

No. I.

(IN THE SECTION-ROOM.)

“MR. BLANK, the subject of your demonstration
Is that of plane curves, as regards osculation.”
Then I turned to the board with increased respiratio
And the laudable instinct of self-preservation
Induced me to foster a determination
To “bugle it” on him; but ah, what vexation!
For after the usual bugling duration
He rudely checked my unseemly elation
By shouting in accents to startle creation,
“Go on, Mr. Blank, with your recitation.”

* * * * *

And I “fessed” like — the place where there’s no
congelation;

Like the place that's considered the ultimate station
Of the "files" who have severed this earthly relation
And have moved their effects to their last habitation
Without having given due consideration
To the matters essential to human salvation.
Then I stopped with a sigh and a sad resignation,
And muttered some words about "time,—preparation;"
But he stopped my ingenuous explication
By remarking with cutting deliberation,
"Time enough, Mr. Blank, for that enunciation.
You have wasted your time in the vain expectation
That the bugle would spare you the just expiation
Of the sin of neglecting your true occupation.
If you wish to avoid the extermination
Which threatens you now, this excoriation

Must induce you to cause the exfoliation
Of your sinful habit of procrastination.
You may take these remarks as a mild intimation
That the limited time of your present probation
Will probably reach an abrupt termination
At the end of the coming examination.
Your mark for to-day is the representation
Of an osculatrix — with a slight elongation."

NO. II.

(ON FURLOUGH.)

It happened in this way: A gentle flirtation
Was turning my thoughts to the incatenation
Of two hearts that beat in synchronal vibration.
It is true that my very intense supplication

Had not met with a hearty and prompt acceptance ;
But still I was spared an emphatic negation,
And the general tone of the whole situation
Gave food for a great deal of deep contemplation.
I was making a frequent profound lucubration
Of my object of tenderest solicitation,
And one evening repeated, with much animation,
The above brief account of my humiliation
In connection with curves. When my little oration
Was finished she said (while the bright scintillation
Of her beautiful eyes made a swift penetration
To the depths of my heart), "What *is* osculation?"
"Well," I said, "to set forth its full signification
Would require a tedious, long explanation.
I can better explain by a slight illustration ;

But if it should meet with your disapprobation,
You need not display any great trepidation;
Just pretend I'm afflicted with noctambulation."

* * * * *

And the kisses I took, in their sweet cumulation,
Would pay me, I'm sure, at the least calculation,
For ten thousand marks like the representation
Of an osculatrix with a slight elongation.

A SONG OF SPRING.

NOW the Spring is drawing nigh,
And the cloudlets in the sky
Skip along
With an air that seems to say,
"Treat your comrades of the gray
To a song."

For the hundredth night to June
Comes upon us very soon,
And the boys
Tune their fiddles and their throats,
Pouring forth in lively notes
All their joys.

Soon the busy bee will hum,
Soon the merry Plebe will come,
And perchance
He will realize his dreams
With his fingers on the seams
Of his pants.

And the "Yearling" then will smile,
And his leisure time beguile
With the same ;
And his eyes with glee will pop
When he sees the "Mr." drop
From his name.

By and by he'll drill a squad,
And he'll tread the verdant sod
 With a charm
That proclaims his chief objective
Is the golden stripe prospective
 On his arm.

Soon the furlough-man will try
To explain the reason why
 Chauvenet
Sould harass him with his squares,
And he diligently swears
 Every day.

And he hums a furlough tune,
For he's thinking now of June
All the while.

Then after taps where will he be?
And will he sleep through reveille?
I should smile!

Now the second-classman bones
Organ-pipes and overtones,
And By Jing!
He can discount Buttercup
By the way he mixes up
Everything.

Molecules and microscopes,
Mollie Smith and all his hopes,
Fill his brain ;
But when Mollie Smith is near
Molecules all disappear
Like the rain.

Now he seeks the wave to trace,
And he thinks he has the case
Very clear ;
But when trying to recite
All his little rays of light
Interfere.

He sees the radiant chase the focus,
Sees them meet by hocus-pocus
At the lens;
And he knows not, I suspect,
If he's *inverted* or *erect*
When it ends.

From the "Gym" on Saturday
Now his melancholy way
Back he wends;
For his mark is the projection
Of a double-convex section
Of the lens.

But the man supremely blest
Is the one who pulls his vest

Gently down
And imagines he's a "Cit,"
With the latest style and fit,
From the town.

For he thinks he'll shed the gray
With but very slight delay,
And depart
With his tall hat and his cane,
And but very little pain
In his heart.

But we'll try and not forget
That he's probably in debt
For his clo'es;
And he'll likely liquidate
By eighteen-ninety-eight
What he owes.

Now a word, before we go,
Of the one to whom we owe
All that's sweet.
How she studies every day
To beguile the boys in gray
At her feet!

See the smile she soon employs
For her choice of all the boys
As they part,
And an *image* you detect,
Real, larger and erect,
In his heart.

Soon the festive maid will wait
For her lover at the gate
Till he come ;
Then the maiden and Cadet
Will rehearse the sweet duet
Called "Yum-yum."

And the button will depart
From the region of his heart,
And insist
That its business is to dangle
From a lovely little bangle
At her wrist.

And a golden sword you'll note,
In the laces at her throat
Neatly placed ;
And their monograms entwined
On a breast-plate you will find
At her waist.

By and by the maid will smile
Sweetly on some other "file,"—

Then a fuss!!

And he'll meet and pass her by,
While she sadly wonders why

This is thus.

Then she'll tell a bitter tale,
Shed a tear, and sadly rail

At her fate;

But, in spite of any wrangle,
She will hold fast to the bangle

And the plate.

Thus the quick returning Spring
Unto each his fate will bring,
Far and wide.
In the meantime I have finished ;
And until my brain's replenished
I'll subside.

O FADED ROSE.

RONDEAU.

O FADED rose in my lapel,
What secret may your fragrance tell?
The dainty hand that placed you there,—
The hand in all the world most fair,—
Has cast on me its mystic spell.

In sweetest fragrance you excel,
And she in every grace, as well.

Tell me the message that you bear,
O faded rose.

And will you not my doubts dispel?
Her fingers trembled and you fell
When she had plucked you from her hair.
I caught you then ; and now I swear
Your secret safe with me will dwell,

O faded rose.

YE CRITIC WISE.

RONDEAU.

YE critic wise (built on a plan
So far above the common man)
Who reads my very humble verse
(I know it could not well be worse)
To find a line that will not scan,—

Go to! I claim not that I can
Stand with the poets in the van
Of modern thought. Avaunt, disperse,
Ye critic wise!

When this rondeau my pen began
I knew the rhymes that end in *an*
Would surely play the act perverse;
But still my plan I'll not reverse
For I must hold you under *ban*,
Ye critic wise.

A VALENTINE.

O COME and dwell beneath my vine,
And these devoted arms of mine
Will round no other gal entwine
If thou wilt be my Valentine.
By day my soul for thee doth pine.
By night in dreams I cast a line
For thee,— a mermaid in the brine.
Till thou and all thy love be mine
For me the sun in vain will shine.
And oh, shouldst thou my suit decline,
How could I all my hopes resign,
And, bending this devoted spine,
Submit to cruel Fate's design?
Oh, rather wilt thou not consign

To me that gentle heart of thine?
Thy every wish I'll quick divine,
"Thy most obedient" always sign,
And to thy slightest will incline.
Then come and dwell beneath my vine,
And these devoted arms of mine
Will round no other gal entwine
While thou art still my Valentine.

SONNET.

ALL silent! Not a breath of air to stir
A single leaf that droops above her head
As if in mourning for the lovely dead.
All silent! yet there comes a voice from her,
A voice I hear not; but I feel its touch,
As, spirit like, it plays upon my heart.
With sad, sweet pain its o'erstrung fibers start
And vibrate. Ah, 'twas loving her too much!

A thousand worlds were far too poor to buy
The memory of even one sweet word
That her poor lips have uttered. And I know
That when she leaves her bright home in the sky
And comes to watch where love's sweet tones she
heard,
While I am true she will not haste to go.

SONNET.

On receiving a package of court-plaster with the inscription
"I heal all wounds save those of love."

I F ever shadows fall upon thy brow
To make the world seem dark to thee and drear,—
If e'er a wound should come to cause a tear,
Or e'en to make thy life less bright than now,
Then mayst thou also find a balm to heal
All wounds save those of love. And if in all
Thy burdens one there be that seems to call
For strength more than thine own, then mayst thou feel
That thou canst call on one who fain would share
Thy burdens but to make them light for thee,—
On one whose love is thus to thee assured.
But mayst thou never—never have to bear
A single wound of love that might not be
By application of *court-plaster* cured.

THE CLASS OF '75, U. S. M. A.

COME fill your glasses to the brim,
Pour in the blood-red wine.

In every drop, my noble lads,

A thousand rubies shine.

We'll pledge our love to old West Point,—

May all her inmates thrive;

But first of all we'll toast to-night

The Class of Seventy-five.

Then lift your glasses high, my boys,—

All ready,— let her drive!

And long as life and wine shall last

We'll drink to Seventy-five.

Our Alma Mater soon we'll leave

To don the Army Blue;

And may we still be worthy sons,

And to our country true.

So let us gay and happy be

And show we're all alive;

We'll laugh and sing, make glasses ring,

And drink to Seventy-five.

Then lift your glasses high, my boys,—

All ready,— let her drive!

For long as life and wine shall last

We'll drink to Seventy-five.

Another bumper,— come and fill :
 “ Our Sweethearts,” one and all.
And may we never leave them more,
 Save at our country’s call ;
And still we’ll breathe their holy names
 Through many a bumper’s foam.
Their prayers shall nerve our arms to fight
 For country and for home.

Then lift your glasses high, my boys,—
 All ready,— let her drive !
And may the hearts we toast to-night
 Be true to Seventy-five.

One more, my lads ; and still 'tis love,
A holy, sacred flame.
“Our Mothers.” Pledge our all to them.
God bless the sainted name !
Through life and death, whate'er betide,
We'll for their honor strive ;
And may they ne'er have cause to be
Ashamed of Seventy-five.

Then lift your glasses high, my boys,—
All ready,— let her drive !
And may our cup be filled with joy,
And God bless Seventy-five.

"SAY NOTHING."

THREE lovely young maidens I met on my way.
(Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing.)

I bowed so politely that each one did say,

"Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing."

Then I said to the first one, "O hear me, I pray,

For long have I loved you and waited this day

My passion to tell,—" but she stopped me to say,

"Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing."

To the next one I bowed in my own modest way,

(Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing.)

And I said, "If you love me not dearly, I pray,

Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing."

Then she laughed in a very embarrassing way

And hastened in silvery accents to say,

"Our hands and our hearts shall *not* meet some day,

Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing."

"O dreamy young maid," to the last one I said,
 (Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing.)
"If fondly you love me and wish to be wed,
 Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing."
Then nothing she said, and I've long rued the day;
For her tongue has been going it every which way,
And I wearily wait for the day when she may
 Say nothing, say nothing, say nothing.

AFTER THE HOP.

TWO TRIOLETS.

SHE.

HE dances like a stick,
And yet I cannot cut him,—
His pocket-book's so thick.
He dances like a stick!
I wish he would be quick!
I must dance until I've got him!
He dances like a stick,
And yet I cannot cut him.

HE.

Her name is on my list

For nearly half the dances.

She surely would be missed!

Her name is on my list,

And she always will persist

In taking all the chances.

Her name is on my list

For nearly half the dances.

TO MY CIGARETTE.

RONDEAU.

O CIGARETTE! O clouds that rise
In fragrant billows to the skies,
And waft my castles in the air
On snowy hills to vanish there,
In your soft folds my spirit lies.

And gazing there, to my surprise,
I always see the same blue eyes.

No other eyes with them compare,

O Cigarette.

I wonder if we might devise
A plan to bind, with stronger ties
Than smoke, my heart to blue eyes fair.
I'll try my luck to-night, I swear!

He never wins who never tries,

O Cigarette.

TWO OF A KIND.

RONDEAU.

HER gauzy web, suspended high
To catch the careless passer by,
By cunning hands is deftly set.
Too late the fluttering victims fret
When they are captured on the sly.

For Madam Spider keeps her eye
Peeled for the gay and frisky fly,
And scoops him tangled in her net,—
Her gauzy web.

Full soon will they entangled lie,
When human victims flutter nigh
The gauzy web of the coquette.
Too late they struggle and regret,
With many a melancholy sigh,
Her gauzy web.

TO S. B. L. ON HER WEDDING-DAY.

DEAR heart of thine, no word of mine
Can make more sweet the bliss
That comes to light thy life to-night
With thy first bridal kiss;
Yet must the wise the young advise,
And so I send you this.

Remember,— (1) To keep the sun
Of love alway at noon.
And also,— (2) Keep ever new
And bright the honey-moon.
And then for (3) you'll always be
Your husband's only "spoon."

INVITATION TO DANCE.

For Music by Jünger.

HEAR the sweet melody
Joyfully ringing.

Softly it comes to thee,

Tenderly bringing

Echoes from Fairy-land,

Fond hearts entrancing.

Why wilt thou idle stand?

Light feet are dancing.

Come, then, my love most fair,

We'll dance with flying feet;

And with the music sweet

Our souls shall mingle there.

Come, dance with me.

Then when the melody—
 Joyfully ringing—
Softly shall come to thee
 It will be bringing
Love's tender memories,
 Our hearts entrancing.
Fast fly the golden days
 While Love is dancing.

Come, then, my love most fair,
 We'll dance with flying feet;
 And with the music sweet
Our souls shall mingle there.
 Come, dance with me.

And then when May is past
And bleak December
Chills with its stormy blast,
Oft we'll remember—
Treading life's Wintry ways,
Love still entrancing—
All those bright golden days
When Love was dancing.

Come, then, my love most fair,
We'll dance with flying feet;
And with the music sweet
Our souls shall mingle there.
Come, dance with me.

THE LIEUTENANT TO HIS LOVE.

WERE I the lord of some fair isle
Girt by rich seas for many a mile,
With golden streets between,—
Where towering castles far more great
Than stand on any king's estate
Rise from their beds of green,—

If all that makes this life most fair
At my command were gathered there
To grace the wondrous scene,
I'd lay my treasures at thy feet
And on my bended knees entreat
That thou wouldst be my queen.

No island lies at my command,
I dwell not in a castle grand,
 Few are my goods, I ween.
O'er two small rooms I hold my sway,
And Blivens lives across the way,
 With one bare hall between.

And all the worldly goods I own
But serve to deck a vacant throne,
 And dreary is the scene.
But I'll hypothecate my pay,
And Bliv will vacate o'er the way
 If thou wilt be my queen.

SOLD.

MY love is successfully sold,
But its price is not found in my pocket.

Myrtilla will handle the gold,

And my hopes have gone up like a rocket.

She has made an enormous per cent

On the small amount that it cost her.

The love that she gave me was lent ;

She has taken it back, and I've lost her.

Her husband is rolling in wealth,

But he's now in the sere and the yellow.

He takes a mild nip "for his health,"

And often it makes him quite mellow.

If she wishes for nothing but gold

Her fortune but little has cost her.

My love has been heartlessly sold ;

She pockets the price, and I've lost her.

My memory lingers to-night

On the scene when she gave me her letters;
And I thought that a tear dimmed her sight
When my love she exchanged for gold fetters.
Ah, well! let her handle the gold.

After all, who can tell what it cost her?
I but know I was terribly sold,—
That a richer man bid and I lost her.

I danced with Myrtilla to-night.

I could not for my life give the reason,
But I thought that her foot was less light
And her manner less bright than last season.
And her sighs were intended to show
What her bargain with Mammon had cost her,—
What a struggle my love to forego.
Then I felt less regret that I'd lost her.

SONNET.

THE light-house, standing by the harbor bar
To guide the stately ship that ploughs the sea
And bring it safe to anchor in the lee
Of rocky shores when sailing from afar,
Lures unto death the bird on weary wing
That flies despite its will to reach the glare
Of dazzling light that draws it to the snare
From which it falls,—a bruised and shattered thing.

So thou, the guiding star that leads me on,
Must soon behold me lying at thy feet
Enraptured 'neath the light of thy sweet smile,
Or broken by the fall and hope all gone.
O tell my waiting soul that it shall meet
Safe anchorage in the light of thy sweet smile.

SONNET.

DEAR friend, for such I trust, (yea, know) thou art,
For naught but goodness, purity and love
Can dwell where smiles like thine, — like smiles
above,—

Light up the bright, fair face, and show the heart
Pure as the face is beautiful; to all

A friend; and if to all, a friend to me.

A friend so gentle, loving, kind and free
From sin, it seems thou hast escaped the fall,
And angels seem with flowers to bind thy brow.
A bright cloud hovers o'er thy young life now,
A cloud of promise, hope, and love, and joy,
And full of happiness without alloy.

On thee, and him who calls thee more than friend,
O never may a darker cloud descend.

LOOKING AHEAD.

I AM roaming here on a western hill,
But my heart is back on the Hudson still;
For all day long, thro' joy or pain,
I dream of my Highland home again,
And old Flirtation's cool retreat
Woos me again to a rustic seat
Where oft I sat in the days that are gone,—
In the days of early manhood's dawn.
My cheek is fanned by the gentle breeze
That wafts sweet perfume through the trees,
And I list to the wavelets' murmuring song,
Kissing the rocks as they pass along.
The sunshine through the trembling leaves
A golden web on the gravel weaves,
And I trace my fate in the lines that are made,
Oft in the bright ones, oft in the shade,

Crossing each other thro' months and years,
All life checkered with smiles and tears;
And there I muse till the bugle strain
Calls me back to the world again.
And oft as memory bids me gaze
Back through the avenue of days
To the time when Alma Mater's care
Taught me how to do and dare,
My heart replies as time rolls on,
"The happiest days are the days that are gone."

The Howitzer, Feb. 23, 1877.

A REVERY.

LIGHTLY the shades of evening fall,
And Night's soft pinions over all
In slumber lie.

Night's gentle queen in calm delight
Looks down through clouds of snowy white
As past they fly.

In yon blue field a silver star
Looks down upon us from afar
With smiling face,
And twinkles with a radiant light
All through the stilly Summer night
Far up in space.

A melancholy stillness reigns,
And Nature's song in sweetest strains
 The ear receives,
Sung where a brooklet glides away,
Or where the breezes gently play
 Among the leaves.

O Night, when thy sweet moments come,
When life has lost its busy hum
 And day has fled,
I love to leave the halls of mirth
And wander o'er the pleasant earth
 With silent tread.

I love beneath the star-gemmed sky
To spend in pleasant reverie
 The midnight hour,
When memory brings her busy train
Of past events to view again
 With magic power.

The joys and sorrows, hopes and fears,
That swayed my soul through weary years
 Forever flown,
Borne back on memory's golden wing,—
Returning like the birds of Spring,—
 Are still my own.

Again I see the silent tear,
Again with aching heart I hear
 The parting sigh,
And friendly forms I see once more
As I have seen them o'er and o'er
 In times gone by.

Yes, wand'ring 'neath the moon's soft rays,
I often think of by-gone days,
 Remembered long;
And often friendship's fond embrace
And words of kindness seek a place
 In memory's throng.

April, 1872.

BALLADE OF LEAP-YEAR.

(BEFORE.)

WHEN Leap-year skies are soft and blue
And lovers for their mates shall pine,—
When pretty maidens come to woo
This tender, waiting heart of mine
And each would be a willing vine
To cling to my commanding height,—
How shall I learn to draw the line?
How shall I choose my life's delight?

When fair blue eyes of tender hue
Turn to my own with love's design,
I feel that there is naught to do
But meekly yield and quick resign
My tender heart, to keep the brine
From clouding eyes so fair and bright.
To whom shall I my heart consign?
How shall I choose my life's delight?

And then when black eyes come to sue
My waiting heart for love's sweet sign,
How can I turn from eyes so true
And their soft glance of love decline?
My tender heart would oft repine
If I should seem their love to slight.
When blue and black are both divine
How shall I choose my life's delight?

L'ENVOY.

(AFTER.)

Where are those eyes so soft and fine?
Not one has come to glad my sight,
And Leap-year's sun has ceased to shine.
How shall I choose my life's delight?

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LINES.

BY the side of a murmuring streamlet,
Where the fresh Summer winds softly blow,
Where the breeze gently plays with the leaflets
And the green leaves and wild flowers grow,—
By that stream I have silently wandered,
With a heart that was weary and sad,
And I've listened,— half dreaming, half waking,—
To the strains of its music so glad.

To the flowers it seems to be singing,
On its green mossy banks growing wild,
And the willows droop lovingly o'er it,
Like a mother caressing her child;
And the birds their soft chorus are chirping,
As its waters exultingly flow,
And the thanks they receive is the music
That is played on the pebbles below.

I have thought as I gazed on its waters
 Flowing onward so joyful and free,
That I'm sailing on Time's stormy river
 As it flows to Eternity's sea;
That I'm journeying on to the ocean
 Where the loved who have left us now sleep,
And I've wondered who'll mourn and who'll miss me
 When I'm launched far away on the deep.

When death's shadows are over me stealing,
 Oh, what hearts will be sorrowful then?
When from all earthly scenes I have parted,
 Who will sigh for my presence again?
Who will sit by the mound where I'm sleeping,
 Who will miss me thro' long, weary years,
Who will strew the bright flowers above me,
 Who will pay me a tribute of tears?

And I've thought that if no weary mortal
Will lament when my spirit has fled,—
That if no kindred spirit will miss me
When I'm gone to the place of the dead,—
Then the birds a sweet chorus will warble
O'er the grave where no mortal will weep,
And the breezes will join in the singing,
And together they'll hush me to sleep.
April, 1872.

APPENDIX

I.

(SEE PAGE 4)

O READER, spare thy pitying eye,
Nor heave a sympathetic sigh
To think my heart was broken.
My life was never aught but gay;
That little button-hole-bouquet
Was but a friendly token.

II.

(SEE PAGE 36.)

ONCE on a time
That little rhyme
Fell from my pen in idle mood;
But far away
Was the sea that day,
And a *one-eyed* girl I never wooed.

III.

(SEE PAGE 80.)

NO cigarette makes clouds that rise
In fragrant billows to the skies
To waft his castles in the air
On snowy hills to banish care,
For in its smoke ye rhymester *lies*.

The "fragrant weed" he doth despise,
And in his wildest moments tries
(Though oft to do great things he dare)
No cigarette.

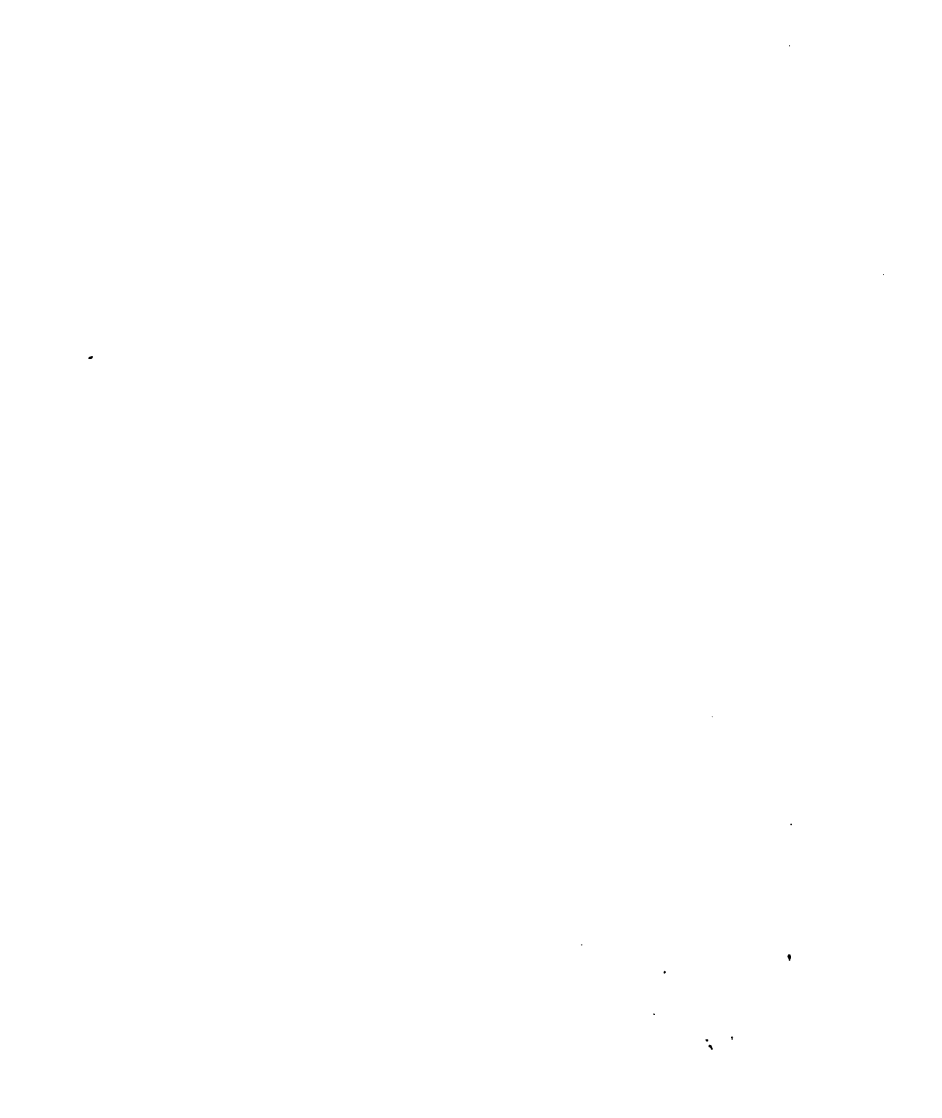
But to prevent one's great surprise
When one a book of verses buys
And finds no smoky verses there,
Ye rhymester did those lines prepare;
But he will smoke until he dies
No cigarette.

IV.

SO ends y^e booke y^e rhymester mayde,—
Or goode, or bad,— too late to mende y^t.
And so y^e rhymester, undysmayed,
Out in y^e cold, bleake worlde must sende y^t.

Yf ye who reade should sadly say,
“Let Fate no more such tasks assign us,”
Att least ye weary mortals may
Bee very grateful for y^e







SEP 2 - 1938

